

e-Bugle

Garrett Bugle Internet Edition

Volume 56

April 2009

No. 4



Calendar

Fri., Mar. 20	Film Society, Town Hall, 7 pm: <i>Croupier</i>	Mon., Apr. 6	Last day to register to vote in May elections, Town Office, 8 am–4 pm
Wed., Mar. 25	Nominations for Town Council, Town Hall, 8 pm (see p 2); Meeting on GPES design process, GPES, 7 to 8:30 pm (p 4)	Mon., Apr. 13	Town Council meeting, Town Hall, 8 pm
Sat., Mar. 28	Farmers Market, Penn Place parking lot, 9 am–1 pm; Voter registration, Town Office, 8 am–noon (p 3)	Tues., Apr. 14	Lunch Bunch, Town Hall, 12:30 pm; <i>Bugle</i> deadline, 4 pm
Mon., Mar. 30	Works by Martha Seigel, Penn Place (through May 2; p 6)	Thurs., Apr. 16	Casual Music Jam, Town Hall, 8 pm
Thurs., Apr. 2	Casual Music Jam, Town Hall, 8 pm	Wed., Apr. 22	Citizens Assoc. meeting, Town Hall, 8 pm: Candidates' Forum
Sat., Apr. 4	Potomac Watershed cleanup, 9 am–noon (p 3); Voter registration, Town Office, 8 am–noon; GIVES collection, Penn Place, 9 am–1 pm; large item pickup	Fri., Apr. 24	Film Society, Town Hall, 7 pm: <i>My Man Godfrey</i> (p 6)
		Sat., Apr. 25	Farmers Market, Penn Place parking lot, 9 am–1 pm
		Sun., May 3	Pre-election picnic, Kellers' (p 8)
		Mon., May 4	Town Council elections

Referendum Aftermath Begins

On the agenda of the March 9 Town Council meeting were a number of items that arose as a result of the referendum vote on March 2. The first of these came during the presentations by residents. Strong interest was expressed in examining and updating the town voting ordinance to remove ambiguities regarding absentee ballots and ensure that the town voting ordinance is in line with state provisions. (Apparently, two years ago, the state changed provisions regard-

ing absentee voting so that voters need only affirm that they will be absent or unable to vote in person in the election.) The Mayor, in affirming a plan to undertake the review, plans to use the expertise of the current election judges to help to rewrite the town's ordinance. Questions were also raised about material that accompanied the first sample ballot mailed to residents, as well as about town monies expended for mailing this material. Another referendum-related action is the Mayor

(continued next page)

Garrett Park Citizens Association
Garrett Park, Maryland 20896-0456

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(continued from previous page)

and Council's plan to post a list of specific elements related to Chapter 4 of the building code.

The Mayor is recruiting expressions of interest for a candidate to serve on the three-member Set-back Advisory Committee. There has been a delay in filling the position previously held by Donn Mader. Although in the past, former mayors have served on the committee, none seems to be available.

Those performing helpful actions related to the referendum were acknowledged: the Citizens Association for organizing the sessions that facilitated comprehensive analysis and debate of the issues, and the election judges (Judy Heyman and Shirin Keyani) and poll workers (Brenda Artim, Margaret Goldsboro, Barbara Thompson, and Ann Gordon) for their day-long dedicated service.

Town life beyond the referendum moved at a variable pace, as noted in a report by Gerilee Bennett on the status of the GP Cooperative Nursery School. Although a written communication was received from the Parks Department, it was not sufficient to initiate action by the Council. The Town is following up with the Parks Department. The Nursery School has instituted changes in its bylaws that would provide for a town preference in enrollment and a liaison position on the Board (see letter, p 7). In reference to the same corner of the town, a committee advising the elementary school building group has discovered a lessening of resolve to make sure that children walking to school are protected from traffic. Natalie Shelton requested some involvement from the Mayor and Council.

With reference to the other end of town, Mike Henley submitted materials on the demolition plans for 11009 Kenilworth. The next Council meeting will provide the first opportunity for that process to go forward.

Mayor Keller reported on the Senior Citizens Steering Committee meeting, which was well attended. There is hope that the storm drains and streets of the town might get stimulus funds. The evolution of Post Office hours (at present reduced counter service by 30 minutes) and techniques for retrieving packages during noncounter hours were covered, as well as the ongoing inefficiencies imposed on postal employees by the absence of box numbers.

The Council passed a motion to begin the Ordinance 2009-01 FY2010 budget process as well as affirming the appointment of election judges Judy Heyman, Brenda Artim, Margaret Goldsboro, and alternate Cliff Tarpy. A second alternate is being sought. In the Town Administrator's report, plans for the coming May 4 election were addressed. A mailing will be coming soon. As a full moon rose higher, the meeting was adjourned at 9:55 pm.

Marian Green

Citizens Association News

On February 25, The Garrett Park Citizens Association hosted a panel discussion and question and answer session on the then-pending referendum on Garrett Park's lot area coverage ordinance. Three citizens who planned to vote "Yes" and three citizens who planned to vote "No" presented their reasons for choosing to vote the way they intended.

Upcoming Meetings. On March 25 the Citizens Association will hold a meeting to accept nominations for the upcoming May 4 Town Council election. Three seats are up for election this year. Please consider running for one of these important positions. If interested, please have someone submit your nomination at this meeting.

On April 22, the Citizens Association will hold the annual Candidates' Forum. Council candidates for the three seats that are up for election will be on hand to discuss their views on issues important to the citizens of Garrett Park.

Citizens Association Annual Dues. The Citizens Association 2009 annual dues are being collected. The annual dues are \$10 for individuals and \$20 per family. Thank you to all of those who have already paid. For those who have not, please submit dues by mailing them to the Citizens Association at Box 456 in Garrett Park.

Garrett Park Listserv. To join this electronic forum, which allows neighbors to communicate information about town concerns, safety issues, upcoming events, and recommended services, e-mail Todd Harris or sign in at groups.yahoo.com/group/GarrettParkneighbors/join.

Questions or comments for the Citizens Association? If so, please send a note to P.O. Box 456 or e-mail Chris Strong.

Remember your loved ones with a fine oil or pastel portrait by Robert LeMar.

For an example of Robert's work, please see a photo of his portrait of the President on the GP bulletin board.

301-962-7451 | rleamar@verizon.net | www.rleamar.com/portraits

The *Garrett Bugle* is a publication of the Citizens Association of Garrett Park, published 10 times a year. Publication of the *Bugle* is supported by member dues. All residents of Garrett Park are members of the Citizens Association. Yearly dues (\$20 per family or \$10 per individual per address) can be sent to Citizens Association, Box 456, Garrett Park, MD 20896.

Citizens Association Officers:

President:	Chris Strong
Co-Vice-Presidents:	Mario Grande and Cathy Rinzel
Treasurer:	Todd Harris
Secretary:	Lara Hines
Members at large:	Leslie Bethke-Pope, Mike Grieb, Cathy Mitchell

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Out-of-town subscriptions cost \$15 (first class) or \$13 (bulk mail). Letters to the editor can be submitted by mail or hand to *Bugle* staff or by e-mail through the town Web site: www.garrettpark-md.gov/submitBugleArticle.php. The editor reserves the right to edit submissions for length and clarity. Unsigned letters will not be printed.

Town Administrator Notes

Citizens Association Meeting. Please plan to attend the Citizens Association meeting in the Town Hall on Wednesday, March 25, at 8 pm, when nominations for the May 4 town election will be made. Three seats on the Council (currently held by Councilmembers Berry, Hansen, and Mandel) are up for election this year. Important election dates are posted in the Post Office lobby and on the town's Web site (www.garrettpark-md.gov).

State Tax Form. Important: When filling out your state income tax forms, please remember to write Garrett Park in the box labeled "City, Town or Taxing Area." This ensures that our community receives its fair share of the income tax revenues that the state distributes to Maryland counties, cities, and towns.

Voter Registration—May Elections. The last day for voter registration for the May 2009 town elections is April 6. If you need a registration form, please pick one up at the Town Office during normal office hours (8 am–4 pm), the Montgomery County Board of Elections (www.montgomerycountymd.gov), or the Post Office. Noncitizen residents of Garrett Park who are not already on the town's voters list and who wish to vote in the May election must also register by April 6 at the Town Office. The Town Office will be open from 8 am to noon on Saturday, March 28 and April 4, for those who are unable to come in during the week. Absentee ballots may be applied for at any time through April 24 and must be received by the Town Office or the Judges of Election before the polls close at 7:30 pm on town election day.

FY 2010 Budget. Copies of the proposed fiscal year 2010 budget are available in the Post Office. If those run out, please come by the Town Office for a copy.

Yard Waste Collection. That annual harbinger of spring, weekly yard waste collection, has returned, as it does every March. Yard waste is now collected every Monday through the end of October. Use paper bags for yard waste, no plastic, please!

Large Item Pickup. There will be a large item pickup on Saturday, April 4.

Walk Smart/Drive Safely. As the weather improves, Garrett Park residents often stroll through the parks and streets to enjoy our beautiful surrounds. Walkers, please remember to be mindful of turning vehicles, wear light colors or reflective clothing to be more visible early and late, and everyone please obey traffic signs, signals, and street crossing markings. Drivers, please yield to pedestrians, observe the posted 20 mph speed limit, and—as usual—be courteous.

Permits. If you are planning to do any construction this spring, please remember that a Garrett Park building permit is required whenever a new structure is to be built, including houses,

additions, sheds, garages, decks, porches, and driveways. This is in addition to the required Montgomery County permit. Please call the Town Office for a permit application, copies of the town's building ordinance (Chapter 4 of the Town Code), and any other information.

Ted Pratt, Town Administrator
garrett-park@comcast.net, 301-933-7488

Annual Rock Creek Cleanup

The annual Potomac Watershed cleanup will be held Saturday, April 4, from 9 am to noon. This year we are covering the area from Randolph Road to Cedar Lane—so lots of volunteers are needed. Last year over 50 Garrett park residents participated. Meet starting at 8:45 am at the first pulloff on Beach Drive south of Strathmore/Knowles across from the playground area. You'll sign in, pick up supplies, and get instructions and an assignment area. Trash bags and gloves are provided—or bring your own gloves, waders, rakes, or anything else appropriate. Prepare to get muddy and wet.

Sponsors include Friends of Rock Creek, the Alice Ferguson Foundation, GP CAN, and others. If you have any questions, contact Charlie Andrews or Elin Quigley.

Green Again

Bob and Judy Weisberg of Cambria Avenue funded this month's green banner in honor of the 40th birthday of their son Josh, who as a little boy growing up here called Garrett Park a "cozy place to live." We thank them for their support.

We have received enough money to keep us going for the rest of this year and into January 2010. Anyone else want to join the "greening" of this little paper? For \$39, you get the pleasure of knowing that you are helping with the printing costs. Mail a check made out to the GP Citizens Association to Box 98, and you will earn my eternal gratitude!

Mary Moyer

Montgomery Child Care Association (MCAA)
Garrett Park

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Open to children ages 4–12
Camp hours: 7 am–6 pm
\$225 a week

June 22 to August 27

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GPES News

Kindergarten orientation is coming up on Thursday, April 23, and Friday, April 24. Children who will be 5 years old on or before September 1, 2009, are eligible to attend Kindergarten next year. If you have such a child, call the office (301-929-2170) to get on the list. Kindergarten attendance is mandatory. If you have a child who is eligible, but do not wish your child to attend next school year, you must complete an enrollment waiver form, which you can get from the office.

A meeting to update residents and parents on the proposed construction of the new school building will be held on Wednesday, March 25, from 7 to 8:30 pm at the school. Revisions have been made to improve the vehicular and pedestrian access. (You can come to hear the presentation and then scoot out to go to the Town Hall for the Citizens Association meeting, which will be taking nominations for three Town Council seats.)

The school is collecting used toner and ink cartridges to help save the environment (they are recycled) and to receive money (\$1 per cartridge) for the school to spend on extras. Bring them to the office; any size will be taken with thanks.

When driving to pick up or drop off children at the school, make sure you come to a full stop at the corner of Oxford and the school property. Apparently cars are making a slowdown only. This is dangerous for children walking to and from school.

In other small bits, the Lost and Found is bursting at the seams with items that have wandered away from their owners. If your child has misplaced a coat or hat, come to the school and perform a search at the stage collection spot. Any unclaimed items will be donated to charity. The Musical Theatre Club production of *The Music Man* will be presented on March 31 at 7:30 pm. There will be a 5th grade Science Fair on April 22 from 7 to 9 pm. Come see and hear about the student projects. All are welcome to both events.

Mary Moyer



Visit Garrett Park's Web site:
www.garrettpark-md.gov

GIVES Update

Thank you to all Garrett Park residents for your positive response to our article in the February *Bugle*. February was a record-breaking month in contributions—over \$700! And March was also good—over \$400. We are so appreciative. This really exemplifies what Garrett Park has always been and should be about: working together as a community. This is why we as a town have been successful in many ways for over 120 years! Let's keep the ball rolling.

The Dinner Program for Homeless Women has made a long-needed name change. It is now called *Thrive DC*. This is because they help support men and children as well as women. Everything else remains exactly the same. Thrive DC receives funding from private foundations, religious and secular organizations, local businesses, the D.C. government, and hundreds of individuals such as you who are committed to ending hunger and homelessness in our community. Thrive DC is honored to be featured as "one of the best small charities" in the 2008–09 Catalogue for Philanthropy: Greater Washington. This organization provides donors with a carefully vetted list of excellent, trustworthy nonprofits to consult when making their charitable decisions. Some residents choose to make one generous check annually, and some wish to contribute smaller amounts monthly. But no matter how small the donation, we appreciate every dollar you can spare.

To make a tax-deductible donation supporting GIVES' work with Thrive DC and the American Friends Service Committee, please continue with your monthly contributions at our Post Office or send contributions to GIVES, c/o Glenda Ingham, Box 258, Garrett Park, MD 20896. Many, many thanks to you and all the many volunteers that make this happen.

Glenda Ingham and Karen Anderson

Conservation House Tour

Calling town conservation heroes: Garrett Park Conservation Action Now (GP CAN) is hoping to highlight 5 or 6 houses in town with energy saving modifications or other green features, yards with rain gardens or water barrels, permeable driveways, solar electricity, houses that have been remodeled rather than knocked down and rebuilt, a good example of a mulch pile, or simply a family with a green lifestyle. We are soliciting interested people to participate. This would entail opening your home or yard for a few hours to residents and conducting a simple kind of "show and tell." The objective is to inform and motivate citizens to help work on climate change. If you would be willing to help with this worthwhile project, please contact Glenda Ingham.

All Community Gathering on Senior Issues a Great Success!

On Sunday, March 8, at 2 pm, the Town Hall filled with seniors and “rising” seniors who, for the next two hours, worked in groups of 6 or 7, each led by a member of the GP Senior Citizens Steering Committee (Anne Atlee, Nguyen Minh Chau, Florence Gootenberg, Rita Pittillo, and Bonnie Tyler). The groups brainstormed and then summarized what services they felt would make a difference in the quality of life for seniors “aging in place,” as well as for nonsenior residents. The result is a list of short- and long-term goals, as well as important questions and issues to pursue in the coming months and year. The Steering Committee will reach out to already established services in Montgomery County and nearby towns to learn about and take advantage of their experiences, providers, agencies, and organizations.

If you can do any of the things on the following list for our neighbors, please call the Town Office (301-933-7488) to add your name to our lists or to offer suggestions. You would arrange how often, at what times, and whether you are offering a volunteer or paid service.

- Bring trash barrels and recycling buckets to the curb on Sunday afternoons.
- Change ceiling light bulbs.
- Offer computer help.
- Do handyperson home repairs.
- Provide rides to or from doctor’s appointments.
- Pick up prescriptions.
- Provide transportation to or from grocery shopping.
- Be a regular daily daytime or evening phone check-in buddy.
- Make social visits.
- Shovel snow.
- Do emergency dog walking.

In addition, David Contois of the Kensington Volunteer Fire Department made an excellent presentation and brought helpful handouts and free smoke detectors to the meeting (see the box for some tips from David).

The Steering Committee wishes to thank all those who attended, the Citizens Association for their generous financing of refreshments for the afternoon, and David Contois for his contributions. If you were unable to make the gathering and want more information, or if you would like to help in any way, please call Elizabeth Henley in the Town Office: 301-933-7488.

Elizabeth Henley,
Facilitator, GPSCSC

Fire Department Facts

Did you know that... ?

- There should be two places of egress for every room in your house.
- Smoke detectors should be replaced every 10 years.
- The Kensington Volunteer Fire Department (KVFD) will test your smoke detectors and replace batteries for you.
- KVFD has free walkers and wheelchairs for short-term loan.
- KVFD will provide transport home from the hospital even at 2 am.
- KVFD will come to your home to help lift a person who has fallen.
- KVFD will check your home for safety hazards.

KVFD volunteer hours (aside from normal business hours) are after 6 pm weekdays and on weekends. Call the administrative offices at 301-929-8000. For ambulance, fire, or police emergency, call 911.

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Bugle Notes . . . Sweet and Sour

- ♪ Our condolences to Matt Stavish and his family on the death of his father Theodore, on February 22.
- ♪ Bradley Shidler, son of Barbara, is hospitalized in Providence, Rhode Island. Barbara visited him for a week in February.
- ♪ Doreen and Richard Siegel of Kenilworth are happy to have their son Jonas, daughter-in-law

Sara, and granddaughter come to stay with them until they find a place of their own in the D.C. area after moving from Chicago.

- ♪ Millie Mader, with family and friends, donated and dedicated a bench in honor of husband Donn Mader on Saturday, March 14. The bench is at the northeast corner of Strathmore and Clermont Avenues. Mayor Keller helped with the festivities.

Jobs List

Needed: Names of baby sitters, pet care givers, lawn mowers, and or other odd-jobs doers for the next *Bugle*. Call 301-933-5764 and leave your name, age, phone number, and what you would like to do over the coming months and this summer.

Art at Penn Place

The next exhibition at the Garrett Park art space, running from March 30 through May 2, will feature the work of Martha Seigel, a long-time Garrett Park resident, artist, and teacher of watercolor painting. For 28 years, students have enjoyed the informality of taking art lessons in Martha's 100-year-old house, often sitting on the porch or in the garden. Until recently Martha's paintings have featured interiors of her Victorian home, views of many Garrett Park historic homes, and her gardens in bloom. These paintings are characterized by a profusion of color and energy. However, this new exhibit displays a complete change of focus and is composed entirely of non-representational work. You won't see any gardens here! No Victorian porches! What remains are the bare elements of painting—that is, line, shape, and color. And what color! Martha finds it exhilarating to be liberated from the world of "things" and to paint straight from her imagination.

In other local art news, there is a Montgomery County high school art show at the Glenview Mansion, and a member art show at the Strathmore Mansion.

Berton Zbar

A Film for Our Times

On April 24, the Garrett Park Film Society is showing *My Man Godfrey*, a romantic comedy with a social conscience that is perfect for the whole family. William Powell (aka "The Thin Man") and Carole Lombard star in this classic screwball comedy from 1936. Set in the depths of the Great Depression, Godfrey, a derelict, becomes "the forgotten man" found by rich socialite Lombard on a scavenger hunt. Taken by his manner, she hires him as the family butler, and the romance and mayhem begin. But *My Man Godfrey* also has lessons about wealth and poverty that may resonate in today's economic climate.

GPFS cooks will open their Soup Kitchen at 7:15; drinks (beer and wine) will be available at 7 pm. Cost of dinner will be \$5. Drinks range from \$1 for soda and water to \$5 for wine. The movie starts at 8 pm. Admission is free to GPFS members and \$5/person for nonmembers or \$10/family. Everything takes place in the Town Hall.

Annual Musicale Set for May

This year's musicale will take place on Sunday, May 17, at 4 pm. Proceeds go as always to the Ilah Gieser Music Scholarship (begun in 1997) to provide a year of music lessons for a child at GP Elementary School. In preparation, the Town Singers are beginning rehearsals and would welcome new members. Rehearsals are typically Sunday nights, but many schedules can be accommodated, and attendance at all rehearsals is not required. If interested, please contact Meme Lincoln or Sue Petito.

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\$225 a week

June 22 to August 27

located next to
Garrett Park
Elementary

All weeks available
Call 301-946-6192
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Nursery School Update

As most of you are aware, the building and playground leased by the Garrett Park Cooperative Nursery School is in danger of closing and possible demolition because of county budget constraints. On behalf of the Nursery School Board and membership, I thank the residents and town of Garrett Park for the support you have provided these past 50 years, and particularly since the recent difficulties. I write to update residents on the status of our building and a few related changes the school has undertaken.

As I wrote in the November *Bugle*, the Nursery School, a parent-owned and operated nonprofit cooperative, has committed to take financial responsibility for repairs and future building maintenance if the town would seek a transfer of ownership of the building and related land ($\frac{3}{4}$ acre) from the county. The town and the Montgomery County Parks Department are currently engaged in negotiations for such a transfer. Because the county requires a like-kind exchange for such transfers, it seeks ownership of the $\frac{1}{4}$ acre parcel owned by Garrett Park on the Penn Place side of county-owned Garrett-Waverly Park. At the March Council meeting, Mayor Keller indicated that before the Council could vote to enact an exchange, a number of details would have to be clarified with the county and agreeably addressed, and the town would need to discuss the proposed exchange at one or more public meetings and hold an advisory vote by residents.

I'm pleased to announce that in recognition of the town's support, the Nursery School has amended its administrative guidelines to add an admissions preference for children of families residing in Garrett Park. The new preference, in effect as of February 2009, applies to admissions for the 2009–2010 school year. (The Nursery School begins accepting applications on October 1 of the year preceding the start of each school year in September; it forms classes and notifies parents of placements in January and February.)

Additionally, we amended our bylaws to establish a new Nursery School Board position,

the Community Liaison Committee Chair. This board position has a term of 3 years and is open only to residents of the town of Garrett Park who are parents of a current or former student of the Nursery School. One of the primary duties of this board member will be to coordinate school activities and issues with the town's government and Citizens Association. Tara Flynn, of Kenilworth Avenue, has volunteered to join the board in this position beginning in April 2009.

We recently kicked off a fundraising campaign to secure the home of the Garrett Park Nursery School. Moira Olevsky, of Rokeby Avenue, has volunteered to chair the campaign. If you or an organization or business with which you are associated would like to contribute to the campaign, please contact Moira at moira@settlementpros.com.

Many thanks to Tara and Moira and their families for their commitment and dedication to ensuring that the Nursery School will continue to provide high quality pre-school education for area families.

Gerilee Bennett, Board President,
Garrett Park Cooperative Nursery School

Time to Move On

I am gratified that the citizens of Garrett Park supported the town and our self-determination in the recent referendum, and that the substantial voting turnout demonstrated once again the well-spring of community feeling in the town. It also shows that the majority of us support our town's self-imposed regulations on land use that have enabled us to retain an environment of ample trees, open space, and low-density construction.

Now, with the referendum and the costly lawsuit behind us, it is time to move forward to make Garrett Park even more pleasurable and its government more responsible and efficient. The intense public discussion and debate that preceded the referendum did uncover and spotlight a number of governmental issues facing the town. We all must come together to solve those issues.

The citizens of the town will have two opportunities soon to help reinforce the verdict of the citizens as demonstrated by the referendum results: the Town Council elections and the work of the Land Use Task force.

The elections and the task force work will be hotly contested and vital to our town's future. It is more important than ever that we all pay attention to, and participate in, both the voting and the land use issue. This is essential if we wish to retain our communal flavor free of divisiveness.

As for the elections and task force, I say: Let the best persons win the former, and the best ideas, the latter.

Charles Snyder

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The map shows a street grid. A vertical street on the left is labeled 'Strathmore Ave.'. A horizontal street at the top is labeled 'Rockville Pike'. A horizontal street at the bottom is labeled 'Grosvenor Place'. A vertical street in the middle is labeled 'Tuckerman Lane'. A small square labeled '10401' is located on Rockville Pike, between Tuckerman Lane and Grosvenor Place. A small circle with an 'M' is located near the intersection of Rockville Pike and Grosvenor Place, labeled 'Market'. A label 'Grosvenor Metro' is located near the top of Tuckerman Lane.

Letter from the Mayor

As I write this month's letter, I have just come from an informal gathering dedicating a bench in honor of the late Donn Mader. Donn was Mayor from 1978 to 1982; in that capacity and many others, Donn contributed much to Garrett Park during the 52 years he lived here. His family and friends made possible the installation of the bench at the northeast corner of Strathmore and Clermont. As Millie Mader observed, it is as likely to be used by those who are simply out for a stroll as by those who are waiting for the Ride-On bus. For me, it was personally satisfying to engage in this small but important recognition of Garrett Park's continuity of community.

The town has now embarked on a much larger project that will reflect continuity in another significant element of Garrett Park's identity—our land use regulation. The Land Use Task Force will make recommendations to the Council for changes and refinements in the way the town shapes its built environment, and the way Garrett Park administers its land use regulations. In framing its recommendations, I hope that the task force looks to both the future of Garrett Park, anticipating the needs of its residents in the 21st century, as well as to the town's past, reflecting the continuity of our unique heritage and the work that so many who have preceded us put toward its preservation.

The Council has introduced the proposed FY2010 budget, for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2009. The ordinance will be considered at the

April meeting. You can view the detailed budget on the town's Web site (www.garrettpark-md.gov) or call the town office for a copy. In recognition of the broad deterioration in the economy, the town anticipates lower revenues; the overall budget reflects an 8 percent decrease from the current fiscal year. For the first time in many years, the town will not go beyond the constant yield tax rate for property taxes; for that portion of your property tax bill that is attributable to the town levy, therefore, you should not see an increase in your tax liability. Owing to recent reassessments by the state of homes in Garrett Park, you may see a decrease in town real estate tax liability. The town is also pursuing the possibility of advancing the implementation of some future Capital Improvement Plan projects by obtaining federal stimulus funding. While this would provide the infrastructure development that is one aim of the stimulus initiative (and would be a relief to the town's capital budget), we need to be realistic about the likelihood of obtaining funding. If the experience of Maryland municipalities that sought stimulus funds for water projects is indicative, requests for funding will outstrip available money by more than 15 to 1.

Finally, Henri and I would like to invite you to the second annual town pre-election lawn picnic in our backyard on the afternoon of Sunday, May 3. This is a nonpartisan opportunity to socialize in advance of the town election. All candidates and all residents are welcome. Please join us.

Chris Keller